

RAK HOSPITAL RAISES AWARENESS ON OBESITY AS A GROWING HEALTH CRISIS THROUGH EDUCATIVE SESSION

As part of the 5th RAK Weight Loss Challenge, RAK Hospital continues its mission to empower the community with knowledge on critical health concerns. In the latest educative session, Dr. Hala Youssef Hamdy, Specialist Endocrinologist at RAK Hospital, shed light on the alarming rise of obesity and its severe consequences, urging individuals to take proactive steps toward healthier lifestyles.

During the session titled Obesity: A Health Crisis, Dr. Hala highlighted the growing prevalence of obesity worldwide, emphasizing that over 40% of the UAE's population is either overweight or obese, including both adults and children. Medically, individuals with a Body Mass Index (BMI) above 25 are classified as overweight, while those exceeding a BMI of 30 fall into the obese category. Further, she pointed out that males with a waist circumference exceeding 40 inches and females above 35 inches face a significantly higher risk of developing life-threatening health conditions.

The session provided a comprehensive overview of obesity-related co morbidities, which include an increased risk of stroke, cardiac ailments, hypertension, diabetes, and high cholesterol levels. These conditions, in turn, adversely impact kidney function and overall well-being. Dr. Hala also emphasized that obesity is linked to various forms of cancer, such as liver, colon, digestive tract, breast, and pancreatic cancers.

Beyond internal health risks, obesity impairs respiratory function, particularly during sleep, often resulting in sleep apnea—an issue that directly affects cardiovascular health. Obese individuals are also more prone to asthma and other respiratory dysfunctions. Excess weight places undue strain on bones and joints, weakening muscles and increasing the risk of osteoporosis. Furthermore, obesity negatively affects fertility, making conception more difficult for both men and women.

Dr. Hala also addressed the psychological and social implications of obesity, noting that overweight individuals frequently experience depression due to poor body image and low self-esteem. Stress, eating disorders, and reduced confidence in social settings further exacerbate the challenges associated with obesity. Moreover, the economic burden is significant, with healthcare costs for obese individuals found to be 68% higher than those of a person with normal weight, while workplace productivity can drop by up to 31%.

The discussion emphasized that obesity is a multifaceted disease with various contributing factors, including genetics, sedentary lifestyles, overconsumption of processed foods,

misleading commercial advertising, and mental health concerns. Dr. Hala stressed that combating obesity requires a collaborative effort involving families, schools, healthcare professionals, and policymakers. She highlighted the need for increased education, better access to treatment options, and ongoing research to address this epidemic effectively.

In her closing remarks, Dr. Hala reinforced that obesity is a significant public health challenge affecting multiple aspects of life. Weight management is crucial for preventing and controlling obesity-related complications. By fostering awareness and taking proactive measures, individuals can improve their health outcomes, ultimately contributing to a healthier and more productive society.

The RAK Weight Loss Challenge remains committed to providing valuable health education and support, encouraging the community to adopt sustainable lifestyle changes for long-term well-being.

Article link

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